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CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 40 OF THE COVENANT

Fourth periodic reports of States parties due in 1997

Addendum

MEXICO*

* This document contains information submitted by the Government of Mexico to supplement its fourth periodic report (CCPR/C/123/Add.1). It is issued without editing, in compliance with the wish expressed by the Human Rights Committee at its sixth session in July 1999.

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ADDENDUM TO THE FOURTH PERIODIC REPORT OF THE GOVERNMENT OF MEXICO ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The report submitted to the Committee describes in detail government actions and programmes to promote and protect human rights. After the report was submitted, a series of particularly important actions and programmes were carried out and amendments were made to the Constitution. Consequently, the Mexican Government considered it appropriate to prepare this addendum to the fourth periodic report which contains a description of these actions and programmes as well as of the principal amendments made to the Constitution of the United Mexican States.

2. The constitutional amendments of 1997, 1998 and 1999 include those made in the following areas: concerning nationality and alien status (March 1997), articles 30, 31 and 32; concerning foreigners, article 33; and concerning Mexican citizens, articles 34, 35, 36, 37 and 38. In 1999, amendments were made to articles 16, 19 and 22, on individual civil liberties (8 March), and to those pertaining to dual nationality. A copy of the current Political Constitution is attached.

II. ARTICLE 2

Guarantees of equality regardless of differences of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, financial status or birth

3. These guarantees have their basis in article 4 of the Constitution, which recognizes the multicultural composition of the Mexican nation and endorses the protection and encouragement of its languages, practices and customs, cultures, resources, specific forms of social organization and its equality of access to the jurisdiction of the State. Amendments have also been made to the Constitutions of 17 states, setting out the rights of indigenous peoples.

4. With regard to equality of the sexes, the Institutional Coordination and Linkage Unit of the National Institute for Indigenous Affairs (INI) is developing the Institutional Gender Programme to address issues pertaining to the development of and respect for the rights of indigenous women.

5. Work is also being done in the area of law enforcement under a project aimed at disseminating the rights of indigenous women by means of communication workshops and radio broadcasts on legal topics.

Legislative, administrative, judicial, political and other measures adopted by the Government of Mexico to guarantee recognition and observance of the rights established in the Covenant, without any distinction on grounds of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, financial status, birth, or any other social condition

Autonomy of the National Human Rights Commission

6. With regard to the amendments made to the Constitution to strengthen the National Human Rights Commission, a presidential initiative was put before Congress in the form of an updated and adapted bill containing amendments to section B of article 102 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, which covers, inter alia, the participation of the upper and lower houses of Congress in appointing the President of the Commission, expansion of the Commission's powers, a mechanism for budget apportioning, and empowering the Commission to challenge the constitutionality of laws which violate the human rights recognized in the Constitution's Fundamental Charter.

7. During the second half of 1998, this reform bill was updated and modified, and on 8 May 1999 was circulated again to the members of the various parties represented in Congress, as well as to the departments of the Federal Executive. All that is needed is for the majority of state legislatures to pass these amendments to article 102 of the Constitution, as the Constitution itself requires.

8. Agreements have been concluded with both the federal and state judiciaries to train and instil awareness in their staff of indigenous practices and customs.

9. Local legislation has advanced correspondingly. Some states have passed very advanced laws and amended their constitutions to promote the rights of indigenous peoples (Oaxaca, Quintana Roo, Nayarit, Jalisco, Durango, Chihuahua, Estado de México, Campeche, San Luis Potosí and Michoacán), and draft legislation is being considered in several other states (Guerrero, Chiapas and Puebla) as well as at the federal level.

10. INI is conducting a legislative studies project to study and analyse proposals. It will eventually issue opinions concerning draft legislation pertaining to the rights of indigenous individuals and peoples.

Measures adopted to promote the dissemination of the rights established in the Covenant, the instruction of the public authorities, and awareness of the Covenant and the resources for putting it into effect

11. The National Human Rights Commission promotes the study, teaching and dissemination of all human rights with a view to strengthening channels of communication through which Mexican society can learn about and apply the theoretical and practical aspects of human rights and the institutions that protect them. In this way, comprehensive programmes for building a human rights culture can be developed.

12. Between May 1997 and May 1998, some 854 courses were given to 43,196 participants, and during the second half of 1998, 461 events accommodated 23,680 participants. This met the

objective of carrying out a massive campaign to promote awareness of human rights through different academic and training activities that included workshops, regular courses, seminars, diploma courses and lectures.

13. These training activities are intended for municipal, State and federal civil servants, the armed forces, federal and state law enforcement officers, correctional facility staff, immigration officers, personnel from the health and public security sectors, public human rights organizations, and any other public institutions that may require them. Information about human rights is also disseminated among high-risk population groups, indigenous peoples, women and children, the elderly, the disabled and prison inmates. In addition, courses and workshops are given through the education system at the elementary, secondary and university levels.

14. The National Human Rights Commission has also published a series of books designed to create an awareness of the human rights enshrined in different international instruments. These books are:

- Derechos humanos y democracia (Human rights and democracy), March 1997
- ¡Tenemos derechos! (We have rights!), pamphlet, September 1997
- Reflexiones en torno a la Declaración Universal de los Derechos Humanos (Reflections on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights), February 1998
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (two posters commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration), February 1998
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights, December 1998
- International human rights instruments, 3 vols., reprinted May 1998
- Report of the fourth International Workshop on National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, held from 27 to 29 November 1997, issued July 1998
- Aspectos básicos sobre derechos humanos (Basic aspects of human rights), pamphlet
- Vulnerabilidad (Vulnerability), pamphlet
- Ocho años de vida internacional de la Comisión Nacional de Derechos Humanos (Eight years in the life of the National Human Rights Commission), March 1999

III. ARTICLE 3

Establishment of the National Human Rights Commission and its Programme on Matters Relating to Women, Children and the Family

15. Acting on complaints filed by members of Mexican society regarding events which constituted violations of the human rights of women and children and other high-risk family members, the Board of the National Human Rights Commission decided in July 1993 to create a Coordinating Office for the Programme on Matters relating to Women, Children and the Family (PAMNF). The objective of this Programme is to study, record and classify, from a gender perspective, complaints of violations of women's rights, based on their gender, and of children's rights, in keeping with their best interests.

16. It is important to note that the PAMNF Coordinating Office provides counselling to anyone who turns to it for help with problems that fall outside the National Commission's mandate. This counselling is provided through the Support Network for Women and Children whose Human Rights have been Violated, which is made up of 157 different entities - 90 non-governmental organizations, 48 government departments and 19 local human rights commissions. In the past year, this network has provided legal, medical, educational and cultural assistance to 133 people. Of these, 105 sought help with instances of domestic violence.

17. In addition, the publications entitled Los derechos humanos de las mujeres (The human rights of women), ¡Tenemos Derechos! (We have rights!) and ¿Qué es la violencia intrafamiliar y como contrarrestarla? (What is domestic violence and how can it be controlled?) have been updated. While these pamphlets have been in print since 1995, it was necessary to re-edit them from a gender perspective. These materials are currently with the Commission secretariat for reproduction so that they can be distributed to the proper authorities and to civil society.

18. It should be stressed that the PAMNF Coordinating Office participates in ongoing programmes of various government and non-governmental organizations working to promote women's rights and combat domestic violence. These include the National Programme Against Domestic Violence (PRONAVI) and the pilot project entitled "Inter-agency action and research in the area of domestic violence".

19. In cooperation with private institutions, the National System for the Integral Development of the Family and other government agencies, the National Human Rights Commission has sought to help eradicate the social problems that affect the most disadvantaged groups of society in particular. At present the Commission is actively involved in the Programme of Action for the Promotion, Dissemination and Protection of Children and Democratic Values; a diploma course on the anthropology of violence among minors; the Inter-Agency Plan of Action to Prevent, Address and Eradicate the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Minors; the Programme to Combat Family Violence (PRONAVI); and the pilot project entitled "Inter-Agency Intervention and Research in the Area of Domestic Violence".

20. Since its inception in 1993, the PAMNF Coordinating Office has sought to ensure that all state and local commissions and state human rights enforcement agencies have recourse to a specific body for the protection of women's rights. Until 31 December 1998, only 15 such

bodies were active in this area. Consequently the National Human Rights Commission will be lobbying in favour of this proposal until every organization has a section devoted to protecting women's rights.

21. The Commission also participated in the preparation of state workshops on the Belém Do Pará Convention, in cooperation with the National Programme for Women, the Autonomous Metropolitan University, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Organization of American States (OAS) Inter-American Commission of Women. These workshops are being scheduled to be held in every state of Mexico.

National organizations established for the purpose of examining legislation and practice which affect the enjoyment of civil and political rights by women

22. Proposals to amend legislation have been put forward with a view to protecting women and children from violence, protecting families from the phenomenon of abandonment and counteracting discrimination against women at all levels. These proposals have been included in the study carried out by the PAMNF Coordinating Office, published under the title "A comparative analysis of local, federal and international legislation pertaining to women and children". If these proposals are taken into account, as has happened in the states of Colima, Oaxaca and Nueva León and in the Federal District, Mexican legislation will be able to protect and defend the human rights of Mexican women and children effectively and, in particular, ensure that the various forms of discrimination and violence committed against them can be overcome.

23. In the state of Colima, consideration was given to certain aspects of the Family Violence (Assistance and Prevention) Act, which was passed on 14 February 1998. In the Federal District (Mexico City), some of the proposals contained in the "Comparative analysis" were used in drafting the recently approved legislative amendments in order to eliminate regulatory texts that imply discrimination, tolerate violence or obstruct equality between the sexes. The state of Nueva León has responded to the legislative reform proposal by submitting a bill to Congress. In Oaxaca, the state Governor presented a reform initiative to the local congress which was passed. This reform will better protect the rights of children to have an identity and to be cared for and raised by both parents. It will also enhance the mechanisms designed to allow children born out of wedlock to exercise the right to be recognized by their parents; to live a life free from violence by establishing the legal concept of domestic violence and punishing such conduct; and to receive an education without discrimination based on gender, which will require state Governments to create mechanisms to afford girls the same study opportunities as boys.

IV. ARTICLE 6

Measures adopted to reduce the threat of war and the production and possession of weapons

24. Through the Federal Firearms and Explosives Act, as amended, the Mexican Government regulates all matters pertaining to firearms, munitions and explosives. The amendments include the amendment of 24 December 1998, regulating the possession of ammunition. The system of

criminal penalties was also modified, making them more severe in order to combat the illegal production and trafficking of firearms, munitions and explosives more vigorously and efficiently, as well as to reduce the rate of crimes committed using firearms.

25. The amendments to the Federal Firearms and Explosives Act published in the Official Gazette on 24 December 1998 include:

> "Article 77. The following shall be punishable by a fine of 10 to 100 days [of minimum wage]:
>
> I. Possession of firearms without having declared them to the Ministry of Defence;
>
> II. Possession of weapons, cartridges or other ammunition in unauthorized areas;
>
> III. Violations of article 36 of this Act. In such cases, in addition to the fine, the weapon shall be confiscated;
>
> IV. Possession of ammunition in excess of the quantities permitted under article 50 of this Act, which literally states:
>
> 'Article 50. Dealers may only sell to private individuals:
>
> (a) Up to 500 rounds of 22-calibre ammunition;
>
> (b) Up to 1,000 shotgun cartridges ...;
>
> (c) Up to 5 kilograms of gunpowder ...;
>
> (d) Up to a maximum of 200 bullets for other permissible weapons.'"

26. The administrative sanctions provided for under article 77 are imposed by the Ministry of Defence.

> "Article 81. Sanctions of two to seven years' imprisonment and a fine of 50 to 200 days shall be imposed on anyone carrying a firearm ... without the corresponding permit."

27. In cases where two or more weapons are carried, the applicable penalty shall be increased by up to two thirds.

28. This article was amended to distinguish between arms permissible for use by civilians and those permissible for sportsmen. Penalties were increased and an exception was made for weapons reserved for the sole use of the army, navy and air force so that stiffer penalties could be imposed on anyone else using such weapons. The penalty for carrying more than one weapon was also increased, on the assumption that anyone doing so clearly had criminal intent, rather than self-defence, in mind.

"Article 82. A prison term of one to six years and a fine of 100 to 500 days shall be imposed on anyone transferring ownership of a weapon without the corresponding authorization or permit."

29. Transfer of ownership of two or more weapons without authorization or a repetition of the behaviour referred to in the preceding paragraph shall be penalized pursuant to article 85 bis of the Act, which is mentioned further on in this document.

30. The amendments contemplate an increase in the applicable penalty, replacing the terms "purchase-sale", "donation" and "exchange" with the generic term "transfer of ownership in any of its forms".

31. Article 83 stipulates that when a person carries two or more weapons, the corresponding penalty shall be increased by up to two thirds.

32. Similarly, when two or three people who are members of a group carry the weapon stipulated in article 11 of the Act, the corresponding penalty shall be doubled.

33. Article 11 also provides for an increase in the applicable penalty for weapons considered as inappropriate for civilian use.

34. Article 83 ter has been added to penalize the simple possession of weapons that are for the exclusive use of the army, navy and air force.

35. Amendments were also made to article 84 so as to make a distinction between weapons intended exclusively for the use of the armed forces and all other weapons permissible for civilian use and their acquisition for commercial purposes. The article states that:

"Article 84. A prison term of 5 to 30 years and a fine of 20 to 500 days shall be imposed on:

(i) Anyone participating in the clandestine import into national territory of weapons, munitions, cartridges, explosives and materials intended for the exclusive use of the army, navy and air force or subject to control;

(ii) Any public official who is obligated to prevent such import and fails to do so;

(iii) Anyone acquiring the objects referred to in subparagraph (i) for commercial purposes."

36. Article 84 bis has been added, which provides for an exclusion for foreigners who bring a weapon into national territory for the first time.

"Article 84 bis. Anyone clandestinely importing into national territory firearms of a type not intended for the exclusive use of the army, navy or air force shall be sentenced to a prison term of 3 to 10 years."

37. Any foreign resident who brings into Mexico for the first time a single weapon of the type referred to in the preceding paragraph shall only be penalized with a 200-day fine; the weapon shall be temporarily confiscated, in exchange for a receipt. When the person leaves Mexico, his/her weapon shall be returned upon surrender of the receipt.

38. Article 85 is being amended to specifically penalize the illegal acquisition of items from arms dealers. This is done in general terms, with the specific acts spelt out in the following article. Article 85 reads:

> "Article 85. A prison term of 2 to 10 years and a fine of 20 to 500 days shall be imposed on dealers in arms, munitions and explosives who acquire such items and fail to prove their legal origin."

39. Article 85 bis is added to punish the specific acts of manufacturing, exploiting and dealing in weapons. This article reads:

> "Article 85 bis. A prison term of 5 to 15 years and a fine of 100 to 500 days shall be imposed on:
>
> (i) Anyone manufacturing or exporting weapons, munitions, cartridges and explosives without the corresponding permit;
>
> (ii) Arms dealers who without authorization transfer the ownership of the objects referred to in subparagraph (i);
>
> (iii) Anyone making improper use of weapons issued to federal, state or municipal law enforcement officers, or to the army, navy or air force."

Measures taken to prevent forced or involuntary disappearances, and the procedures laid down and followed to effectively investigate complaints relating to disappeared persons, especially when the security forces or other official bodies are alleged to be involved

40. Statistical tables are attached which show the number of complaints and cases of missing persons and cases of missing persons dealt with under the National Human Rights Commission's Programme Relating to Persons Presumed Disappeared (PREDES) between 1998 and March 1999.

41. During April and May 1999, 10 more cases of missing persons were reported and seven cases were closed, with 770 cases still open.

42. The National Human Rights Commission has spoken out in various national and international forums against forced or involuntary disappearances, which it considers to be a serious violation of fundamental human rights. Consequently, PREDES has been conducting, through existing mechanisms, the necessary investigations to discover the whereabouts of persons reported as missing.

43. During the second half of 1998, 113 visits were made to 26 states, including the Federal District, with a total of 1,414 investigations carried out nationwide. In addition, 374 requests for information were processed by different federal, state and municipal departments.

44. As a result of this action, between May and December of 1998 some 27 cases were solved: in 20 cases, the persons were found alive, while in seven cases, either the persons were found dead or evidence was found of their demise. It should be noted that in eight of these 20 cases, family members informed the National Human Rights Commission of their determination to keep the reappearance of their loved ones in absolute secrecy. Out of respect for that wish, the following is a list of cases solved in which secrecy is not an issue:

1.	Ricardo Ortiz Macias	
2.	Carlos Alberto López	United Nations
3.	Angel Leal Alonso	United Nations
4.	Román Morales Acevedo	United Nations
5.	Gilberto Celis Pineda	
6.	Simón Enrique Corona Linares	
7.	Javier Téllez Moreno	
8.	Jorge Antonio Reyes Careaga	
9.	Juan José Gómez López	
10.	Héctor Ernesto Escobosa López	
11.	Pedro Eligio Cabañas	
12.	Victor Feliciano de los Santos	United Nations
13.	Pablo Mendoza Rufino	
14.	Antonio Hernández de los Santos	United Nations
15.	Rufino Ramírez Vázquez	United Nations
16.	Araceli Valtierra Estrada	
17.	Vicenta Delgado Mota	United Nations

18. Armando Leal Quintero

19. Hermelindo Ochoa Galinda

V. ARTICLE 7

Statistics relating to complaints of torture or ill-treatment, investigations and outcome of complaints of torture, imposition of penalties.

45. Attached is a table which shows the evolution of the complaints of torture filed with the National Human Rights Commission between 1990 and 1998, as well as some conclusions regarding the authorities alleged to have been responsible during the period May-December 1998. In addition, a graph is attached which shows the number of torture complaints received, resolved and still under investigation during 1998 and the first five months of 1999.

46. Between May 1997 and December 1998, 18 requests for investigation by the Commission involved torture as the principal violation. These requests were as follows:

- No. 42/97: sent on 30 May 1997 to the Head of the Federal District Government and referring to events reported on 16 and 17 April that took place in the East Mexico City Men Detention's Facility. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 47/97: sent on 25 June 1997 to the Governor of the state of Oaxaca and the Municipal President of San Miguel Soyaltepec, and referring to the case of Mr. Esteban Correra Manuel. This case was fully resolved;

- No. 50/97: sent on 30 June 1997 to the Under-Secretary for Civil Protection, Prevention and Social Rehabilitation of the Ministry of the Interior, and referring to the case of the Dr. Alfonso Quiroz Cuarón Special Care Centre. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 68/97: sent on 30 July 1997 to the Governor of the state of Durango and referring to the case of Mr. Marcelino Guerrer Flores and others. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 69/97: sent on 31 July 1997 to the Attorney-General of the Republic and referring to the case of Mr. Juan Antonio García Carrillo. This case was completely resolved, with those responsible being punished for the crime of torture;

- No. 75/97: sent on 28 August 1997 to the Governor of the state of Durango and referring to the appeal filed by Mrs. María Eugenia Cázares Barragán de Díaz.- At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 85/97: sent on 8 September 1997 to the Military Attorney-General and referring to the case of Mr. Abelardo Gastélum Maldonado and others. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 86/97: sent on 8 September 1997 to the Military Attorney-General and referring to the case of Mr. Jorge Agustín Bustamante de la Mora and others. This case was completely resolved;

- No. 87/97: sent on 8 September 1997 to the Military Attorney-General and referring to the case of Mr. Oswaldo Gómez Contreras. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 96/97: sent on 10 October 1997 to the Military Attorney-General and referring to the case of Mr. Teodoro Juárez Sánchez, Mr. Pablo Gaspar Jimón and others. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 100/97: sent on 20 October 1997 to the Military Attorney-General and referring to several cases of arbitrary arrest, battery, torture, breaking and entering, threats and intimidation, and enforced disappearance in the state of Guerrero. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 110/97: sent on 19 November 1997 to the Governor of the state of Oaxaca and referring to the case of Mr. Jorge Alberto Matadamas Martínez, correspondent for the magazine Ecos y Expresión in the city of Oaxaca. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 14/98: sent on 11 February 1998 to the Governor of the state of Puebla and referring to the case of Mr. Edmundo Reynaldo Gayosso Licona, reporter for the newspaper Confederación Internacional de Prensa Mexicana. This case has been completely resolved;

- No. 17/98: sent on 13 February 1998 to the Attorney-General of the Republic and referring to the case of Mr. Alfonso Aviña Tavarez and Mr. José Luis del Real Rubio. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 29/98: sent on 30 March 1998 to the Governor of the state of Sonora and to the President of the Sonora Human Rights Commission, and referring to the appeal filed by Mr. Antonio Chávez Vega. At present, this case is partially resolved where the former authority is concerned and completely resolved where the latter authority is concerned;

- No. 30/98: sent on 30 March 1998 to the Governor of the state of Guerrero and referring to the case of Mr. Luis Ayala Mendoza and others. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 88/98: sent on 31 October 1998 to the Attorney-General of the Republic and referring to the case of Mr. José Rutilo-Ruiz Balcázar. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 112/98: sent on 31 December 1998 to the Governor of the State of Veracruz and to the City Council of the Municipality of Jesús Carranza, Veracruz. At present, this case is partially resolved insofar as both authorities are concerned.

47. Lastly, it should be noted that during the first five months of 1999 no requests for investigation involving cases of torture have been issued.

48. On the basis of recommendations made and pre-trial settlements reached by the National Human Rights Commission, during the period from June 1990 to December 1998 the competent authorities brought sanctions against 3,118 public officials, of whom 1,506 were federal, 1,548 were state and 64 were municipal.

49. The following public officials were sanctioned for acts involving the crime of torture between May 1997 and December 1998:

- Criminal proceedings were brought against Camilo Pacheco Ramos, Hilario Ruiz Ortiz, Gabino Santiago Jiménez and Andrés Santiago Santiago, judicial police agents in the state of Oaxaca, as a result of Commission request No. 110/97;

- Criminal proceedings were brought against Juventino Velázquez García, infantry lieutenant in the Mexican Army, as a result of Commission request No. 86/97;

- Carlos Alberto Angeles González, Guillermo Galván Calvo and Anastacio Morales Gaspar, commanding officers of the Judicial Police in the state of Oaxaca, were suspended from duty as a result of Commission request No. 110/97;

- Federal Police officers Javier Callejas Ramírez and Miguel Angel Martín del Río were suspended from duty as a result of Commission request No. 69/97;

- Porfirio Bernardino Sánchez and Adelfo Quiroz Cortés, Justice Department officials in the state of Oaxaca, received a reprimand and a warning as a result of Commission request No. 110/97;

- Benito Javier Villareal Elizondo, a Justice Department official, received a reprimand and a warning as a result of Commission request No. 69/97;

- Mr. Nestor Artemio Zaragoza Alarcón, a Judicial Police officer in the state of Oaxaca, received a reprimand and a warning as a result of Commission request No. 110/97.

Measures adopted to train law enforcement officials and prison warders

50. Attached to this report are graphs which show the number of training activities carried out by the National Human Rights Commission from June 1998 to May 1999 and the number of participants in these activities. These graphs show that, during the aforementioned period, 812 training courses were given to a total of 42,702 participants. Of these, 165 courses and

workshops were given to public security personnel; immigration agents; correctional facility staff; federal and state justice department agents; federal and state judicial police officers; fiscal police officers; highway patrol officers; and members of the armed forces.

51. No training courses were given on the important issue of torture. However, emphasis was placed on this subject when dealing with the general subject of human rights. Following are some of the training activities undertaken:

- May 1998: in coordination with the Attorney-General of the Republic, two talks of human rights were given to federal crime investigation trainees;

- June 1998: in order to instil an awareness and create a culture of human rights among public service providers, the National Human Rights Commission offered two workshops on the subject to personnel working in the delegations of Coyoacán and Cuajimalpa in Mexico City;

- July 1998: in order to help create an awareness that would promote law enforcement, and in cooperation with the Centre for Army, Navy and Air Force Studies, the National Human Rights Commission gave two lectures and offered a course-workshop on the non-jurisdictional protection of human rights and on complaint procedures and the legal framework of the Commission to members of the armed forces;

- August 1998: with the collaboration of the District Attorney's Office of the state of Baja California, two course-workshops entitled "Human Rights and Law Enforcement" and "Human Rights and Public Security" were given to regular police officers of that state;

- September 1998: two course-workshops, on human rights and public security and human rights and law enforcement, were given to state justice department personnel in several states around the country;

- October 1998: in cooperation with the General Directorate for Public Security of the state of Saint Luis Potosí, the Police Academy of the state of Hidalgo and the Public Security Secretariat of the state of Tamaulipas, five course-workshops, two lectures and two seminars were organized for members of the regular police forces of those states;

- November 1998: in coordination with the District Attorney's officers of the states of Coahuila and Hidalgo, the National Human Rights Commission gave one course and seven course-workshops on human rights and law enforcement and human rights and the use of force and firearms to state police officers and justice department agents;

- March 1999: with the help of the Attorney-General's Office, the National Human Rights Commission offered three sessions on the national non-jurisdictional system for the protection of human rights as part of a professional training course for judicial police officers;

- April 1999: in cooperation with the Ministry of Defence, the National Human Rights Commission offered seven sessions in military zones 1, 16, 17, 21, 22, 24 and 37 in the states of Querétaro, Guanajuato, Michoacán, Estado de México and Morelos and in the Federal District. The topic was "Human rights and the armed forces", and the participants were officers and rank-and-file members of the armed forces.

52. In order to ensure full respect for the human rights of prison inmates, the National Human Rights Commission gave 14 course-workshops in 1998 to the security and custodial and technical-judiciary personnel of the General Directorates for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation (correctional facilities) in the states of Aguascalientes, Baja California, Campeche, Coahuila, Colima, Durango, Sinaloa and Tamaulipas. These were attended by 585 people.

53. Examples of the above include:

- January 1998: a lecture on human rights and public security was given to security and custodial personnel of the General Directorate for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation of the state of Coahuila, with the collaboration of the National Human Rights Commission;

- April 1998: in cooperation with the General Directorate for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation of the state of Sinaloa, a course-workshop on human rights and the use of force and firearms was given to security and custodial personnel of that institution;

- August 1998: two course-workshops on the human rights of prison inmates were given to security and custodial personnel of the Centres for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation of the state of Baja California;

- September 1998: three course-workshops on human rights and the use of force and firearms were given to security and custodial personnel of the General Directorate for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation of the state of Colima;

- October 1998: in coordination with the Centre for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation of the state of Tamaulipas, two course-workshops on the human rights of inmates were given to Centre personnel;

- March 1999: in cooperation with the General Directorate for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation of the state of Baja California Sur, a course on human rights, security and custody was given to prison warders of that state.

54. It is also important to note that, since respect for the human rights of prison inmates is one of the National Commission's priorities, a course-workshop on the subject was given during the second half of 1998 to inmates in the state of Guanajuato, as a prerequisite for their social rehabilitation, and to their families.

55. Through the production, publication and distribution of printed material, the prison affairs programme seeks to provide a clear, realistic and objective view not only of the situation of prison inmates but also of the prevailing situation in Mexico's prisons. The following materials, which include books, brochures, pamphlets and manuals, are now available:

1. Handbook of basic knowledge for prison personnel
2. Letters to criminals
3. An assessment of prisons in Mexico
4. Compendium of laws on minimum standards for the social rehabilitation of sentenced criminals and the enforcement of liberty-privation and restriction sanctions in Mexico
5. Roberto Larios Valencia, expert on the prison system
6. Suggestions for preventing corruption in prisons
7. Guide for visiting inmates in the Federal District correctional centres
8. Proposal and report on the Mexican prison system
9. Prison instructors' handbook
10. Security, supervision and custody manual
11. Draft model prison regulations
12. Shepherd's song of hope
13. Model organizational and operational handbook for the Interdisciplinary Technical Councils
14. Small sample of prison theatre
15. "Prisión aún"
16. Prison supervision: findings and benefits
17. The struggle for human rights in the Mexican prison system
18. The reality of Mexican prisons
19. Security and custody instruction manual
20. Comparative study of alternatives to prison sentences in the various states

21. What is prison supervision?

22. Criteria for classifying the prison population

23. Guide for obtaining the benefits of freedom

24. Human rights in the imposition of punishment in prisons

25. The competence of the National Human Rights Commission in Mexican prisons

26. Rights and obligations of security staff and warders

27. Manual on the human rights of prisoners in the Mexican prison system

28. The prison experience today: contributions and expectations

29. Compendium of national and international documents relating to prisons

30. The prison system and human rights (a statement of the activities of the National Human Rights Commission, (1990-1996))

31. Violence in Mexican prisons (an investigative report)

32. The supervision of human rights in prisons (guide and study documents).

56. For its part, the National Institute for Indigenous Affairs (INI), through agreements with authorities responsible for the administration of justice and law enforcement, has designed and implemented training and information programmes. These deal with issues involving the indigenous population of Mexico, their rights, the provision of penal, federal, state and agrarian justice, and other matters.

57. Mexico's Ministry of Defence has also published manuals on human rights and actions taken by the Military Justice Department to combat drug trafficking. Human rights has also been included as a subject in the military education system, courses have been organized at the different territorial command posts, and a human rights teacher-training course has been established at the Army and Air Force Studies Centre.

58. Training activities carried out by the Ministry of Defence include the following:

1. With the participation of the state human rights commissions and in coordination with the National Human Rights Commission, a series of lectures have been held in the country's military regions and zones. Attendees were military personnel, and the purpose of the lectures was to foster a human rights culture;

2. Lecture series have been organized within the armed forces. These were attended by personnel of the military and naval justice system. There have also been national forums and congresses; particularly noteworthy was the national congress entitled "The War Tribunal: its

constitutionality", which was attended by personnel from various departments and agencies from the three levels of government as well as state and non-governmental agencies devoted to the protection of human rights and interested members of the general public;

3. In addition, staff of the Military Justice Service are being encouraged to take specialized and post-graduate courses on human rights given by Federal Government agencies such as the Matías Romero Institute of Diplomatic Studies of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Federal District Human Rights Commission and the National Institute of Criminal Sciences, as well as leading national educational organizations;

4. The Ministry of Defence continues to maintain offices for receiving reports from and providing consultation for the civilian population of the states of Chiapas and Guerrero in order to follow up complaints of alleged human rights violations by military personnel in timely fashion.

59. In addition, during 1998, training was given to 161 central and regional immigration agents.

VI. ARTICLE 8

Information on compulsory military service and national service for conscientious objectors

60. Mexican legislation makes no provision for the legal concept of "conscientious objector" for persons who are obliged to perform national military service in accordance with the Guarantee of Equality contained in the Mexican Constitution. Under this provision, military service is compulsory for everyone who is Mexican by birth or naturalization, without distinction as to religion, race or colour. In principle, no one is permitted exemption from this obligation.

61. Despite the fact that Mexican legislation makes no allowance for the above-mentioned legal concept, under the Military Service Act and its regulations the Ministry of Defence may exempt from military service anyone who fails to meet the requirements specified in the aforementioned regulations. Such persons include individuals with physical, moral or social impediments, who are covered by the provisions of article 10 of the Military Service Act, which states that:

> "The Regulations pertaining to this Act shall specify grounds for total or partial exemption from military service, setting out the impediments of a physical, moral or social nature and the manner in which they can be proved. By virtue of this Act, the Ministry of Defence is empowered to exempt from military service those who fail to meet the needs of national defence."

62. The Military Service Act stipulates that active service may be postponed for students for the time required for programmes of study, which are governed by law. The Ministry of Defence may extend such postponements in the following cases: when, owing to justifiable circumstances beyond their control, students are unable to complete their studies in the specified period; Mexicans living abroad (up to five years); persons under arrest or serving a prison

sentence upon attaining 18 years of age; and persons who support their families during the five years prior to attaining enlistment age, although such persons must fulfil active service if they cease to be the sole supporter of their families before reaching enlistment age.

63. The Government of Mexico wishes to point out that in Mexico, in compliance with the National Development Plan 1995-2000, various programmes exist which make performance of military service more flexible. These include activities to promote sports, basic education for adults and social work. It is thus apparent that Mexico does indeed offer several alternatives for the performance of military service.

VII. ARTICLE 9

Statistics on complaints about arbitrary arrest and deprivation of liberty; results of investigations and penalties imposed

64. Attached is a graph prepared by the National Human Rights Commission on the number of complaints of arbitrary arrest that were filed, resolved or still being processed during 1998 and the first five months of 1999.

VIII. ARTICLE 10

Control mechanisms established to ensure that convicted and unconvicted prisoners are not subjected to torture or other ill-treatment; independent and impartial procedures for the submission and investigation of complaints of torture or ill-treatment by prison personnel

65. Attached is a graph prepared by the National Human Rights Commission on the number of complaints of torture in detention centres and prisons that were filed, resolved or still being processed during 1998 and the first five months of 1999.

66. The objective of the National Commission's Prison System and Detention Centre Programme is to ensure and monitor respect for of the human rights of inmates, both adult and juvenile, in the country's prisons, and of persons who are mentally ill or insane and confined in psychiatric hospitals, as well as persons held in administrative detention by the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office or in immigration detention centres of the National Institute for Migration.

67. Under this programme, the National Commission is empowered to receive and investigate individual or collective complaints regarding alleged violations of human rights by federal personnel or agencies. However, as regards penitentiary affairs, the Commission is empowered to receive those complaints in which a local authority is alleged to be responsible.

68. Between May and December 1998, some 1,242 complaints were processed, of which 1,079 were resolved and 163 are still being investigated. The complaints concern the administrative efficiency of prison facilities, the quality of life and legal status of inmate, and corruption and drug and alcohol addiction and trafficking inside prisons.

69. The National Commission conducts visits to the country's detention centres in order to ensure strict respect for the fundamental rights of inmates. In the second half of 1998, there were 37 visits made to 29 prisons for adults in the states of Coahuila, Chiapas, Guanajuato, Jarisco, Querétaro, Quntana Roo, Tabasco and Yucatán and in the Federal District.

70. During the period January-April 1999, some 47 supervisory visits were made to 47 adult prison facilities. These visits uncovered problems of autarchy, over-population, the import and sale of drugs, poor living conditions and bribe-taking on the part of authorities and inmates alike.

71. Statistics have been compiled on complaints of torture or ill-treatment in the country's detention centres and by their investigation, outcome and punishment.

72. All situations involving violations of the human rights of inmates are brought to the attention of the competent authorities. During the last six months of 1998, the National Human Rights Commission issued 12 requests for investigation in respect of correctional facilities. These were sent to the Governors of the states of Campeche, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Michoacán, Oaxaca, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Veracruz and Yucatán, and to the Attorney-General of the Republic.

73. During the period January-April 1999, six requests for investigation in respect of penitentiary facilities were sent to the Governors of the states of Colima, Guanajuato, Querétaro and Sinaloa, with two sent to the Governor of the State of Chiapas.

74. The following is a list of the requests issued by the National Human Rights Commission in respect of correctional facilities:

- No. 52/98: sent on 30 June 1998 to the Governor of the state of Chiapas and referring to the case of Social Rehabilitation Centre No. 3 in Tapachula, Chiapas. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 72/98: sent on 31 August 1998 to the Governor of the state of Oaxaca and the City Council of the Municipality of Juxtlahuaca, Oaxaca, and referring to the case of the Juxtlahuaca Municipal Prison, Oaxaca. At present, this case is partially resolved by both authorities;

- No. 76/98: sent on 30 September 1998 to the Governor of the state of Tamaulipas and referring to case of the social rehabilitation centre in Reynosa, Tamaulipas. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 87/98: sent on 31 October 1998 to the Governor of the state of Michoacán and referring to the case of the Mil Cumbres Social Rehabilitation Centre in Charo, Michoacán. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 88/98: sent on 31 October 1998 to the Attorney-General of the Republic and referring to the case of Mr. José Rutilo Ruiz Balcázar, an inmate at the social rehabilitation centre in the city of Carmen, Campeche. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 94/98: sent on 25 November 1998 to the Governor of the state of Campeche and referring to the case of the social rehabilitation centre in San Francisco Kobén, Campeche. This request was accepted, and proof of resolution is about to be submitted;

- No. 96/98: sent on 30 November 1998 to the Governor of the state of Veracruz and referring to the case of the social rehabilitation centre in Coatzacoalcos, Veracruz. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 102/98: sent on 17 December 1998 to the Governor of the state of Oaxaca and referring to the case of the Tlaxiaco Municipal Prison, Oaxaca. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 103/98: sent on 18 December 1998 to the Governor of the state of Chihuahua and referring to the case of the District Social Rehabilitation Centre of Guadalupe y Calvo, Chihuahua. This case is scheduled to be resolved on time;

- No. 105/98: sent on 18 December 1998 to the Governor of the state of Yucatán and to the President of the Superior Court of Yucatán, and referring to the case of mentally ill persons imprisoned in the social rehabilitation centre of Mérida, Yucatán. At present, this case is partially resolved by the former authority and fully resolved by the latter authority;

- No. 107/98: sent on 30 December 1998 to the Governor of the state of Oaxaca and referring to the case of the Putia de Guerrero Municipal Prison in Oaxaca. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 111/98: sent on 30 December 1998 to the Governor of the state of Tabasco and referring to the case of mentally ill persons imprisoned in the State of Tabasco Social Rehabilitation Centre. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 12/99: sent on 25 February 1999 to the Governor of the state of Chíapas and referring to the case of Mr. Jesús Refería Martínez, an inmate at the Cerro Hueco social rehabilitation centre, Chíapas. This case is on the verge of resolution;

- No. 13/99: sent on 25 February 1999 to the Governor of the state of Sinaloa, the City Council of the Municipality of Sinaloa de Leyva, Sinaloa, and the City Council of the Municipality of San Ignacio, Sinaloa, and referring to the case of the municipal prisons in the state of Sinaloa. At present, this case is partially resolved by the first authority and on the verge of resolution by the second and third authorities;

- No. 22/99: sent on 30 March 1999 to the Governor of the state of Chíapas and the City Council of Cintalapa de Figueroa, Chíapas, and referring to the case of inmates of the Cintalapa District Prison, Chíapas. At present, this case is partially resolved by the former authority and on the verge of resolution by the latter authority;

- No. 23/99: sent on 31 March 1999 to the Governor of the state of Querétaro and referring to the case of the Amealco District Prison, Querétaro. At present, this case is partially resolved;

- No. 29/99: sent on 28 April 1999 to the Governor of the state of Guanajuato and referring to the case of the social rehabilitation centre in Celaya, Guanajuato. At present, this case is on the verge of resolution;

- No. 32/99: sent on 30 April 1999 to the Governor of the state of Colima and referring to the case of the Manzanillo Municipal Prison, Colima. At present, this case is on the verge of resolution.

Laws and practices of the Mexican prison system to guarantee the reform and social rehabilitation of prisoners

75. Under the terms of the agreement signed with the Ministry of the Interior and the terms established in the National Prevention and Social Rehabilitation Programme 1995-2000, INI is participating in activities related to social rehabilitation.

76. The Institute is carrying out a project for the release of imprisoned indigenous people; from 1995 to December 1998 it arranged the release of 5,346 indigenous prisoners (attachment 1).

IX. ARTICLE 12

Restrictions on exercise of the right to freedom of movement within national territory or the right to leave the country by certain categories of persons, such as foreigners

77. Attached is information regarding the number of complaints filed by foreigners on matters of immigration, the nationality of the complainants, the violations reported and the authorities allegedly responsible.

Requirements for foreigners entering national territory

78. The General Population Act and its regulations set forth the requirements for foreigners wishing to enter national territory. The specific provisions are contained in article 62 and 53, respectively.

> "Article 62. Foreigners wishing to enter the Republic must first meet the following requirements:
>
> I. Submit an official certificate of sound physical and mental health issued by the authorities of their country, in the cases determined by the Ministry of the Interior;
>
> II. Pass the examination given by the health authorities;

III. Provide, under oath, the information requested of them by the immigration authorities;

IV. Identify themselves by means of proper and authentic documents and, if applicable, prove their immigration status;

V. Submit an official certificate of prior history issued by the authorities of their place of normal residence, in the cases determined by the Ministry of Interior;

VI. Meet the requirements specified in their entry permits."

"Article 53. Foreigners wishing to enter the national territory shall give proof of their status as migrants by providing the relevant documents and, where appropriate, shall comply with the requirements laid down in their entry permits and those which, in accordance with the migration status granted under this Act, must be fulfilled prior to admission to the country."

X. ARTICLE 14

Age below which a minor may not be imprisoned for an offence and the maximum age at which a person is still considered a minor

79. The minimum age established by Treatment of Juvenile Offenders Act for ordinary offences in the Federal District and for federal offences for the rest of the country is between 11 and 18 years; such persons are considered to be minors and can be prosecuted as such, in accordance with article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and article 6 of the aforementioned Act. Children under the age of 11 who violate criminal statutes shall be sent to a public, social or private social reform centre which deals with such matters.

Special courts and procedures, the legislation governing proceedings against minors and the importance attached to encouraging the social rehabilitation of minors

80. Mexico's states have special agencies that deal with violations of criminal law by minors; the system of wardenship or "custody of minors" ensures that various constitutional guarantees and the human rights of minors are fully respected during proceedings. Of particular importance in both systems is the emphasis on the social rehabilitation of minors and the prevention of criminal behaviour, which is achieved through comprehensive programmes that include education, vocational training, the teaching of ethics and psychological and medical support.

Appeals procedures, access to appellate courts, requirements for the appeal of a decision, and realization of the right to due process in appellate courts

81. In their respective regulations, the "custody of minors" and wardenship systems contemplate means by which appeals, under different names, of decisions by a trial court are brought before a higher authority. The requirements for filing a motion for appeal consist of stating that the time-limit established in the corresponding regulation was not observed. Since

there are no other requirements for exercising the right to due process in the lower courts, most rulings against minors are appealed by the minors themselves, their counsel or their legal defenders.

XI. ARTICLE 17

Remedies against violation of this right and extent to which they are used by victims, and also results of complaints

82. The National Human Rights Commission's complaint programme independently issues a detailed follow-up report on cases in which precautionary measures have been requested. Between May 1997 and May 1998, 24 cases were reported, of which 20 involved the penitentiary area, 3 referred to the right to personal safety, and 1 involved the right to legality and public security.

83. During the second half of 1998, 14 cases were processed, 8 of which involved the penitentiary area and six 6 involved personal safety. The authorities to which request for investigation were sent included Directorates-General for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation in the states of Michoacán, Chiapas and Tabasco, the General Secretariats for Government of the states of Chiapas and Guerrero, the District Attorney's offices in the states of Chihuahua, Oaxaca and Tabasco, the Governor of the state of Guerrero and the directors of the Topochico prison in Monteray and the Nuevo León and Apodaca prisons in Nuevo León.

84. Likewise, through its Programme of Action for the Highlands and Rainforests of Chiapas, the National Commission has requested the adoption of precautionary measures in pursuit of its objective of receiving, classifying and investigating complaints of probable human rights violations arising from the unrest in that state, and promoting a culture of human rights in the region.

85. Information regarding the precautionary measures requested from May 1997 to May 1998 can be found on pages 756 to 759 of the corresponding annual report of the National Human Rights Commission.

86. During the second half of 1998, eight requests for precautionary measures were sent to the Coordinator of the Programme of Action for the Highlands and Rainforests of Chiapas:

- On 19 May 1998 a request was sent to the Government Secretariat of the state of Chiapas to safeguard the welfare of Santa Aguilar Gordillo and Kendi Lisseth Rosales Carpio, inmates of the social rehabilitation centre in San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, and to provide them with food;

- On 27 May 1998 a request was sent to the Secretary of Health for the state of Chiapas to safeguard the welfare of the inhabitants of the municipalities of Ocozocoautla, Cintalapa, Sitalá, Ocosingo, Sabanilla, La Concordia, Las Margaritas, Pijijiapan, Yajalón, Palenque, Arriaga and Tumbalá, by promptly dispatching sufficient doctors and medicines into the zones affected by forest fires;

- On 2 June 1998 a request was sent to the Governor of the state of Chíapas to provide humanitarian aid for 43 persons in the main square in Tuxtla Gutiérrez who had been displaced from their homes. The request also sought to ensure the physical safety of their families, who lived in the town of Nicolás Ruiz, and to restore peace to that zone.

- On 12 June 1998 a request was sent to the Government Secretariat of the state of Chíapas to ensure the physical safety of Mr. Manuel Cruz and his family, to restore peace to the communities of Roberto Barrios, Municipality of Palenque, and, through dialogue, to restore peaceful coexistence among the inhabitants of the community of Ceteltón, San Juan Chamula Municipality;

- On 17 June 1998 a request was sent to the Government Secretariat of the state of Chíapas to employ dialogue with a view to obtaining the agreement of the inhabitants of San Jerónimo Bachajón, Chilón Municipality, to coexist peacefully.

87. During the second half of 1998, the above-mentioned Secretariat was also requested to ensure the physical safety of the following:

(a) Jesús Mendoza Rodríguez and Cristóbal Díaz López, members of San Miguel Arcangel Parish, Tumbalá Municipality;

(b) Abelardo Pérez Pérez and his family, residents of Yaxalumil, Chenalhó Municipality;

(c) Inhabitants of the town of La Revolución, Tila Municipality;

(d) Margarita Martínez Alvarez and members of the Catholic Civil Organization, residents of the community of El Limar, Tila Municipality;

(e) Belisario Pérez Ruiz, Jorge Santiz Gómez, Miguel Pérez Santiz, Miguel Santiz Pérez, Victorio Gómez Colmento, Bartolo Gómez, Antonio Gómez Santiz, José Gómez Biquii and the other members of the civil organization Las Abejas in Yashemel, Chenalhó Municipality;

(f) Luis Fernando Menéndez Medina, an inmate of Building 1 at the social rehabilitation centre in Cerro Hueco, Tuxtla Gutiérrez, to provide him with specialized medical care;

(g) Antonio López Hernández, José Sánchez Pérez and Mariano Sánchez Pérez and his family;

(h) Members of the civil organization Las Abejas in Chenalhó Municipality, as well as the inhabitants of the community of Unión Progreso in El Bosque Municipality.

Practical measures adopted to prevent future violations, such as training for police officers and public servants, and penalties for arbitrary behaviour by public officials

88. The objective of the National Commission's "Combating impunity" programme is to reveal the names of public officials who, on the basis of recommendations or conciliation, warranted the application of disciplinary measures or criminal prosecution.

89. Between 16 May 1997 and 15 May 1998, 287 public officials received sanctions. Of these, 195 were federal officials and 92 were state officials.

90. In response to recommendations, sanctions were imposed on 127 public officials (53 federal and 74 state), as follows:

Criminal prosecution	39
Dismissal	8
Disqualification	18
Suspension	19
Reprimand or warning	41
Fines	2

91. In response to proposals based on conciliation, sanctions were imposed on 160 public officials (142 federal and 18 state) as follows:

Criminal prosecution	9
Dismissal	11
Disqualification	4
Suspension	53
Reprimand or warning	83

92. As reported in the section dealing with article 7, between June 1990 and December 1998 the competent authorities sanctioned 3,118 public officials based on recommendations and conciliation actions emanating from the National Human Rights Commission. Of these, 1,506 were federal, 1,548 were State and 64 were municipal.

93. According to official reports on implementation of the National Commission's recommendations, between 16 May and 31 December 1998, sanctions were imposed on 62 public officials (10 federal and 52 state) who warranted the application of disciplinary measures or criminal prosecution, as follows:

Criminal prosecution	2
Dismissal	9
Disqualification	2
Suspension	20
Reprimand or warning	29

94. Likewise, as a result of the conciliation actions carried out between the National Commission and the authorities accused, during the second half of 1998 the following sanctions were imposed on 27 public officials, all at the federal level:

Criminal prosecution	3
Dismissal	9
Disqualification	3
Suspension	5
Reprimand or warning	7

XII. ARTICLE 18

Information concerning measures guaranteeing the absolute right to have a religion, and also the right to manifest one's religion and the legal restrictions imposed on free manifestation of religion

95. INI has a programme for the protection of sacred sites. Its purpose is to ensure that the religious practices of indigenous peoples may be carried out both in private and in public. It also responds to requests for mediation in disputes arising from religious differences in order to create places of respect and tolerance and guarantee the right to religious freedom.

Justification for granting or refusing authorizations to the mass media

96. The procedures and requirements for the use of electronic media are specified in legislation and, where applicable, in the public notices relating to their operation. Granting or denial of authorization is subject to legal, technical and economic requirements, which are public and the same for all participants. A copy of the legislation of the Qualifying Committee for Publications and Illustrated Magazines is attached, which contains the Regulations on Publications and Illustrated Magazines, the agreements drawn up by this Committee and a list of procedural formalities drawn up by the Committee.

Special duties and responsibilities relating to the exercise of freedom of expression

97. A graph is attached which shows the number of complaints received, resolved and still under investigation by the Programme on Offences against Journalists and Civil Defenders of Human Rights during 1998 and the first five months of 1999.

98. Between May and December 1998, 30 complaints of offences against journalists were received. These were added to the 35 case files from the previous period which are still pending. Of the 65 cases, more than 65 per cent, or 42 cases, were resolved in the following manner: 1 recommendation; 9 resolved during processing; 10 instances of legal counselling provided to the complainants; 8 cases involving counselling in which the matters were personal; 5 cases in which the complainants withdrew charges; 4 cases closed due to lack of interest on the part of the complainant; 4 cases closed due to lack of jurisdiction; and 1 case remitted to the state Human Rights Commission of the state of Guerrero.

99. Information is also being provided on the actions taken and recommendations put forward by the National Human Rights Commission under its Programme on Offences against Journalists and Civil Defenders of Human Rights.

100. It should be noted that in 1975, Mexico established the National Journalism and Information Award under article V of the Civil Incentives and Rewards Act. The purpose of this honour is to acknowledge journalists' careers and accomplishments. The Award consists of a certificate, a medallion and a cash prize, and it is given once a year.

XIII. ARTICLE 20

Legislative measures adopted and national practice in respect of the prohibition of any propaganda for war and for any advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence

101. The National Human Rights Commission has established the "National unity against violence" campaign. In doing so, it considered the fact that violence as a social phenomenon, whether by private individuals or by the organs of the State, is inseparable from human rights violations. For this reason, efforts have been made out jointly with the government sector, civil society, institutions of higher education and public human rights organizations to propose and carry out a variety of activities aimed at eradicating violence from everyday life in Mexico.

102. One year after this campaign was established, the four sectors (the Government, civil society, higher education and public human rights organizations) that support the programme's activities were consulted with a view to determining long-term goals. As a result of this consultation, various ideas and data were obtained that gave a new direction to the programme.

103. The National Commission has worked with human rights commissions in the states to organize courses, lectures, panel discussions, workshops, forums and radio campaigns with a view to promoting a social culture that will prevent both individual and social violence.

104. Closer ties to higher education institutions have led to an exchange of information related to academic and scientific activities:

- Information about individuals, agencies and organizations that study violence was gathered with the help of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) with a view to establishing a database. This effort has resulted in the publication of two provisional directories;

- An inter-agency research project on social violence in Mexico was set up in 1997, and the Chairperson of the National Commission is a member of the project's academic advisory committee;

- Representatives of the National Commission have participated as speakers in a number of events, including the "International Visions of Change" symposium at the Technology and Further Studies Institute of Monterrey, in a radio UNAM programme

called "La respuesta está en la sciencia" (The answer lies in science), in the training course for officials of the Federal District judiciary and in the Judicial Studies Institute of the Federal District Superior Court of Justice.

105. Among the activities carried out by the National Commission in the second half of 1998 were the analysis and dissemination of questions relating to individual and collective violence. These activities were carried out in association with the public human rights organizations in the country's states.

106. The activities in question included events such as courses and lectures, workshops, panel discussions, forums and radio campaigns aimed at promoting a new social culture that would eliminate violence from all human relations.

107. One of the most important tasks undertaken through this programme is the compendium of the recommendations relating to the problem of violence issued by human rights commissions and public prosecutor's offices for the defence of human rights. This compendium, which is still being put together, will form the basis of a publication with commentaries. The state human rights commissions have collaborated actively on this project.

108. The National Human Rights Commission has already issued the following publications on the subject of peace and tolerance:

1. Race, racism and the tally of violence, August 1996

2. Violence: better comprehension and less judgement, September 1997

3. What is domestic violence and how can it be controlled?, pamphlet and card, September 1996

4. What is domestic violence and how can it be controlled?, pamphlet, October 1997

5. "Let's educate for peace and human rights", handbook published with the cooperation of the Nuevo Léon Autonomous University, May 1998

6. Declaration on the Promotion among Youth of the Ideals of Peace, Mutual Respect and Understanding between Peoples, adopted by the United Nations on 17 December 1965; pamphlet, August 1998.

XIV. ARTICLE 22

Right to form associations and groups for the promotion of human rights

109. A high priority of the National Human Rights Commission is its relationship with civil society. For this reason it has established a special programme for relations with national and international non-governmental human rights organizations.

110. The Commission has placed special emphasis on strengthening the channels of communication and cooperation with civil organizations concerned with human rights. It is fully convinced that, if progress is made in sharing views about human rights, it will be possible to fight impunity, strengthen the rule of law and protect the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

111. The non-governmental organizations in Mexico that defend human rights constitute a significant source of support for citizens because they serve as a liaison between the people and the National Commission in following up complaints that have been filed. Commission officials and representatives of civil organizations thus meet to follow up on complaints submitted by the non-governmental organizations.

112. From May 1997 to May 1998, the Commission and these organizations jointly undertook 71 different projects to help a total of 3,800 individuals. One important activity was the National Human Rights Forum, which was attended by dozens of civil organizations, public institutions and concerned persons, with a total of 850 participants. The current status of efforts to defend human rights was discussed and various alternatives were proposed.

113. As regards public information, non-governmental organizations have requested various materials published by the Commission, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, We have rights, The human rights of women, and books have also been distributed, such as the Commission's directory of human rights organizations and the book Education and family, published jointly with the Iberoamerican Child Abuse Federation. Moreover, in order to publicize the legal basis of public human rights institutions, 82 copies of the National Human Rights Commission decree, act and regulations have been distributed. Lastly, support to non-governmental organizations has also taken the form of a donation of 15 book collections to serve as the basis for human rights libraries.

114. From 16 May to 31 December 1998, the National Human Rights Commission completed 23 training activities and responded to 50 requests from non-governmental organizations in various areas: public information and promotion, participation in working sessions with these organizations with a view to providing them with legal assistance, and representing the Commission at events in order to strengthen relations with these organizations while also publicizing human rights.

115. In addition, the experience acquired in promoting human rights and providing training in this area has allowed the National Commission to organize training and refresher courses for human rights promoters. During the second half of 1998, 12 workshops were held with various non-governmental organizations in the following states: Morelos, Coahuila, Puebla, Baja California, Jalisco, Michoacán, Chihuahua, Quintana Roo and Querétaro and in the Federal District.

116. Regular communication through site visits has been another strategy for strengthening respect for working relationships with civil organizations. Some 143 visits have been made to 111 human rights non-governmental organizations in 19 states, strengthening relations through agreements for joint action with many of them in the areas of training and education in human rights.

117. The National Commission has also sought to maintain close contacts with the colleges of attorneys and bar associations, as well as with other professional associations and religious organizations, so that they actively participate in promoting and protecting human rights and carry out joint activities aimed at analysing the country's social problems from the perspective of human rights. A number of visits were thus made to update the directory of human rights organizations for the Federal District and 11 states.

118. Agreements for cooperation with non-governmental human rights organizations have been pursued, and 21 such agreements were renewed so that work on prior commitments can continue and activities designed to achieve their objectives can be supported. Another collaborative effort with non-governmental organizations is the joint publication of brochures and materials for mass distribution on various human rights issues, especially with regard to children, women, the disabled and the elderly. Training and public information events have also been carried out in these areas.

Measures adopted to guarantee that such groups may act freely and perform a role in the protection of human rights

119. Attached is a graph showing the number of complaints received, finalized and still being processed by the National Human Rights Commission under the Commission's Programme on Offences against Journalists and Civil Defenders of Human Rights during 1998 and the first five months of 1999.

120. During the second half of 1998, the National Commission handled 32 cases of injuries to members of non-governmental human rights organizations. Ten of these were complaints that were filed during that period and 22 were files that were already open. As of 31 December 1998, 25 cases had been settled and only seven were still pending.

121 Information has also been attached about the actions and recommendations issued by the National Commission as part of its Programme on Offences against Journalists and Civil Defenders of Human Rights.

XV. ARTICLE 23

The Mexican Constitution

122. One of the changes made to the Constitution is the Decree on the Nationality Act. This Act establishes the regulations applicable to articles 30, 32 and 37, paragraphs A and B, of the Constitution, and its provisions constitute national policy that is to be applied throughout the country. It is enforced by the executive branch of the Federal Government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

123. Some of the most important articles of the Nationality Act published in the Federal Gazette on 23 January 1998 are the following:

"Article 3. Documents that constitute evidence of Mexican nationality are any of the following:

1. A birth certificate issued in due form;

2. A certificate of Mexican nationality to be issued at the request of the party concerned, and solely for the case of articles 16 and 17 of this Act;

3. A letter of naturalization;

4. A passport;

5. A citizen identity card; and,

6. In the absence of any the above-mentioned documentary evidence, nationality can be accredited by any means in accordance with the law that convinces the authorities that the conditions for Mexican nationality have been met.

"Article 4. Notwithstanding the provisions of the preceding article, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs may demand additional evidence from the party concerned to prove Mexican nationality if any irregularities are found in the documentation submitted. The Ministry may also do this whenever it is necessary to verify the authenticity of the accrediting documentation.

"Article 5. Federal authorities shall be required to furnish the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with all reports and certificates it requests in order to carry out the tasks entrusted to it by this Act. In the case of state and municipal authorities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs shall request such reports and certificates as relate to their respective areas of competence whenever required to discharge their functions under this Act.

"Article 6. Unless it is proved otherwise, it is presumed that a Mexican has acquired a foreign nationality if he or she has taken legal action to obtain or keep such a nationality, or when said individual represents himself or herself as a foreigner to any authority or in any public instrument.

"Article 7. Unless it is proved otherwise, it is presumed that an abandoned child found on Mexican territory has been born in Mexico and is the child of Mexican parents."

"Chapter II. Concerning Mexican nationality by birth

"Article 12. Mexicans by birth who leave the national territory or return to it should invariably do so representing themselves as Mexican nationals, regardless of whether they possess or have acquired a different nationality.

"Article 13. It is understood that Mexicans by birth who possess or acquire another nationality will act as nationals with respect to:

1. Legal transactions that they conclude in Mexican territory and in zones over which the Mexican State has jurisdiction, according to international law;

2. Legal transactions that they conclude outside the limits of national jurisdiction and by virtue of which:

(a) They hold any amount of the capital stock of any Mexican corporation or entity that has been established or incorporated in accordance with Mexican law, or exercise control over such corporations or entities;

(b) They extend credit to any corporation or entity of the type mentioned in the preceding paragraph;

(c) They own real estate located in Mexican territory or possess other rights whose exercise is limited to Mexican territory."

"Article 15. Under article 32, paragraph 2, of the Political Constitution, when the exercise of a function or position is reserved for persons who are Mexican by birth and have not acquired a different nationality, this restriction must be expressly indicated in the applicable provision.

"Article 16. Mexicans by birth who are considered by another State to be nationals of that State must present a certificate of Mexican nationality whenever they wish to hold a position or function for which one of the requirements is to be Mexican by birth and not have acquired any other nationality."

"Chapter III. Concerning Mexican nationality by naturalization.

"Article 19. A foreigner who wishes to become Mexican by naturalization must:

I. Submit an application to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs indicating the desire to acquire Mexican nationality;

II. Make the renunciation and swear the oaths referred to in article 17 of this Constitution;

III. Prove that he/she can speak Spanish, has knowledge of the country's history and has become integrated into the national culture; and

IV. Prove that he/she has resided in Mexican territory for the period stipulated in article 20 of this Act.

"Article 20. Foreign nationals who intend to acquire Mexican nationality must prove that they have resided in national territory for at least five years immediately prior to the date of application; ...

"Article 21. Temporary absences from the country shall not be deemed to interrupt the residence period unless such absences take place during the two years immediately prior to submission of the application and exceed a total of six months."

"Article 24. The procedure for obtaining the letter of naturalization shall be suspended if the applicant is sentenced to imprisonment or is subject to trial in Mexico, or the equivalent abroad."

XVI. ARTICLE 24

Measures taken to ensure that children enjoy their right to receive special protection

124. The Programme on Matters relating to Women, Children and the Family has continued the work begun under the Inter-Agency Programme of Action on Children's Rights and Democratic Values with a view to promoting and disseminating respect for and defence of children's rights. Representatives of the Commission attended 10 meetings on this issue from May to December 1998, and two television spots were broadcast during time-slots provided by the Radio and Television Commission. Two posters on children's rights and against violence were produced and disseminated throughout the country.

125. Intra- and inter-agency coordination with the National System for the Integral Development of the Family and UNICEF, the Ministry of Education, the Federal Electoral Institute and the Federal District Human Rights Commission have made it possible to work together in two areas:

- The National Rights of the Child Week in November 1998, which included several events such as the Second Congress on Child Abuse, the Latin American Seminar on Child and Youth Participation, the Children's Journalism Prize and the National School of Plastic Arts Design Award with the theme of "No to child abuse and family violence";

- Work continued on the Programme to Prevent and Address Child Prostitution and Pornography and the Sale of Children with a view to preventing and eradicating the commercial and sexual exploitation of children.

126. Information is attached to this document on the number of complaints brought by children; cases in which the alleged victim is a minor; the violations reported; and the outcome.

Measures adopted to guarantee the immediate registration of children in the territory of Mexico

127. In this regard, INI has established a civil registration assistance programme designed to make civil registration procedures accessible to all indigenous groups, in keeping with their customs and usage, and allowing them to use names that are characteristic of their culture.

Measures adopted to guarantee that a child will have a nationality

128. The Nationality Act lists the following as documentary evidence of Mexican nationality: the birth certificate, issued in due form; the certificate of Mexican nationality, issued at the request of the party concerned and solely in connection with articles 16 and 17 of this Act; the letter of naturalization; the passport; the citizen identity card; and, in the absence of any of the documentary evidence just cited, nationality may be accredited by any lawful means that may convince the authorities that the conditions for possessing Mexican nationality have been met.

129. In addition, article 7 of the Nationality Act specifies that, unless proved otherwise, it is presumed that an abandoned child found in Mexican territory was born in the country of Mexican parents.

XVII. ARTICLE 25

Information on the rules and regulations governing equality of access to public service

130. Article 32 of the Constitution stipulates that:

> "All other circumstances being equal, Mexicans shall be given preference over aliens in the granting of any type of concession, as well as for government employment, position or office for which the status of citizen is not a requirement. In peacetime no alien may serve in the Army nor in the police or public security forces."

131. Certain activities are reserved solely for Mexican nationals, with foreigners excluded in almost all cases, as for example, public employment, the army, police, air force, merchant marine, airport command and control, civil aviation, the navy and customs services.

132. Article 15 of the Nationality Act specifies that under article 32, paragraph 2, of the Constitution, when a position or function is reserved for persons who are Mexican by birth and who have not acquired any other nationality, this requirement must be expressly stated in the applicable provision.

XVIII. ARTICLE 26

Measures adopted between 1992 and 1996 to amend the current legislation and enact new laws in order to guarantee the non-discriminatory nature of the law in accordance with the principle that all persons are equal before the law and have the right to equal protection under the law

133. In order to promote the protection before the law of indigenous peoples without discrimination, a project is under way to train community advocates, agents and translators. This is done on a community basis, so that communities themselves decide who will receive such training. The persons selected participate in training courses in the various areas of national law and the rights of indigenous peoples and individuals.

134. The participation of indigenous peoples in training is also promoted through activities that will help their communities in the area of law enforcement and administration. This involves work in translation, management and/or advocacy, and the provision of public information about the collective rights of indigenous peoples.

135. The benefits obtained from the implementation of this project have been:

- Support for and promotion of the development of groups of indigenous persons who can play a leading role in the struggle to defend their collective rights;
- Training of interested persons in the process of legal self-defence;
- Direct support for the organizational efforts of those groups, including their involvement in the legal procedures required for incorporation as civil associations;
- Promotion of community involvement in law enforcement and administration.

XIX. ARTICLE 27

Specific positive measures taken to protect minorities and indigenous peoples and to preserve their ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic identity

136. The 1992 amendment of articles 4 and 27 of the Mexican Constitution, among others, expressed the commitments undertaken by the Mexican Government when it signed Convention No. 169 of the International Labour Organization in 1990, a development which led to a number of changes in the Constitution, in state constitutions and in secondary laws, codes and regulations.

137. INI also operates a social welfare programme which includes sub-projects in the areas of primary health care, tertiary health care, agricultural dayworkers and traditional medicine through inter-agency coordination with the health sector and agreements with the Mexican Social Security Institute and the Ministry of Health and Welfare.

138. INI has always collaborated with the authorities responsible for the administration of criminal justice and law enforcement (for federal and state affairs) and has always responded to their requests to assign translators to assist indigenous persons involved in such matters. In the state of Chiapas in particular, 429 translators have been assigned to take part in the same number of cases.

139. Attached to this report is a chart showing the number of complaints received, concluded and currently being handled by the National Human Rights Commission's Programme for Indigenous Affairs during 1998 and the first five months of 1999.

140. The National Human Rights Commission has paid special attention to vulnerable groups. Accordingly, article 29 of the Commission's by-laws, which refers to indigenous communities, stipulates that the organization has jurisdiction in regard to complaints of human rights violations in indigenous communities that show evidence of a systematic pattern of such violations.

141. The Commission established the Programme for Indigenous Affairs specifically to serve the country's indigenous peoples and communities. Its objectives are to review and analyse the legal status of indigenous individuals in prison, and to make arrangements for their early release, and to provide training courses on human rights for representatives, traditional authorities, community members and co-owners of communal land in indigenous communities. The Programme also holds meetings with persons in indigenous communities to document complaints about alleged human rights violations in these communities.

142. On 16 February 1998, the National Commission's Fourth General Inspection Office was established. Its mandate, in addition to the above, includes responding to complaints of alleged human rights violations of persons of indigenous origin or belonging to indigenous communities, conducting studies and research in this area, and promoting and providing public information about the human rights of indigenous communities, peoples and individuals in the country.

143. From the time of its establishment until 30 April 1999, the new Office has received 1,014 complaints, of which 843 cases have been closed and 171 remain open. The main causes for conclusion were the following:

Counselling	472
Settled during the proceedings	212
Outside the Office's sphere of competence	54
Referral to state commissions	19
Recommendations	18

144. The Fourth General Inspection Office has built a bridge for communication with the indigenous peoples of the country by establishing contact with some of their representatives, visiting various communities throughout the country, receiving complaints, giving courses and arranging for the early release of indigenous individuals held in various prisons in the country.

145. As a result of this work, visits have been made to communities of the Chinantec and Zapotec ethnic groups in Oaxaca, the Tepehuan and Huichol in Sinaloa, the Tarahumara in Chihuahua, the Otomí in Estado de Mexico, the Tzeltal, Tzotzil and Tojolabal in Chíapas, and to the Mixtec and Triqui who work as migrant farm labourers in the Baja California valleys. In situ visits were made to gather complaints, teach courses on human rights, and to conduct research about the preservation of indigenous peoples' cultures and their right to development.

146. With regard to prisons, in June 1994 a programme for indigenous inmates was launched in various social rehabilitation and prevention centres in the country with a view to studying the legal status of their court cases and, where appropriate, issuing statements for their benefit. This programme is aimed at persons who are being tried or have already been sentenced in federal and local courts.

147. Visits were made to various prisons in the country to hear the complaints of indigenous inmates. Since its inception, the Inspection Office has made arrangements for release in 1,252 cases.

148. The National Human Rights Commission also provides assistance and counselling on an ongoing basis and immediate response to complaints brought by members of indigenous communities, especially from the state of Chíapas, through the General Coordinating Office for the Highlands and Rainforest of Chíapas, which was created in response to the conflict that broke out in that region in January 1994.

149. It should be noted that during the second half of 1998, some 23 activities in the area of human rights education were carried out, such as lectures, conferences, workshops and courses, with the cooperation of various organizations, educational institutions and civil service agencies, including INI.

150. Pamphlets and other printed materials on the human rights of indigenous people, women, minors, "first-aid" for the protection of personal freedom, domestic violence, migrants, incarcerated prisoners and other subjects were distributed to, inter alia, members of indigenous communities.

151. The National Human Rights Commission recently published the following material on the human rights of indigenous people:

(i) A directory of federal public sector programmes and services for the development of indigenous peoples, July 1996

(ii) Common law and positive law among the Mixteco and Amuzgo peoples and people of African descent on the south Guerrero coast, May 1997

(iii) Legal customs of indigenous peoples, new edition, June 1997

(iv) Legal traditions and customs of indigenous communities, August 1997

(v) Guide for indigenous peoples, January 1998

(vi) The rights of indigenous peoples, January 1999

152. As a result of the conflict that broke out in January 1994 in the state of Chíapas, this state has been under continuous scrutiny by national and international government and non-governmental human rights organizations. In 1994, the National Human Rights Commission set up as part of its internal structure the General Coordination Office for the Highlands and Rainforest of Chíapas, with a view to providing an effective response to complaints arising in the state.

153. To prevent human rights violations in Chiapas, the staff of the General Coordination Office frequently travels to communities in the conflict zone in order to maintain the presence of the National Commission and to learn about the human rights situation of the people so that it can respond promptly to complaints deriving from events that occurred in that region.

154. During the second half of 1998, the Office continued to work on those cases that had not been closed prior to May of that year, in addition to receiving and investigating complaints filed after 16 May:

Complaints in process as of 15 May 1998	64
Complaints received after 16 May 1998	212
Total	276

155. Of the 212 complaints mentioned above, 113 were classified as presumed violations of human rights, of which 34 were attributed to local authorities, 67 to federal authorities and the remaining 12 to both levels of authority. The principle causes of complaint were injury, unlawful arrest, threats, demands to perform an act or commit an omission without legal grounds, stealing, procrastination in law enforcement, denial of the right of petition, intimidation, irregularities in the transfer of prisoners and violation of the right to peace and the right to freedom of movement.

156. The civil service bodies alleged to be responsible for these human rights violations were the Office of the Attorney-General of the Republic, the Office of the Attorney-General of the state of Chiapas, the Ministry of Defence, the National Office for Prevention and Social Rehabilitation, the Superior Court of Justice and the National Institute for Migration.

157. Of the 276 complaints dealt with in the second half of 1998, 69 are still being processed and the other 207 were dealt with as follows:

Recommendations	1
Lack of jurisdiction	32
Counselling and/or referral to the appropriate agency or entity	60
Files attached to other cases	1
Voluntary discontinuance by plaintive	11
Lack of interest on the part of plaintive	11
Settled in the course of proceedings	91

158. Recommendation No. 74/98 was addressed to the Governor of the state of Chíapas in connection with the acts of violence that took place on 10 June 1998 in the communities of Unión Progreso, Chavajeval and the municipal seat of El Bosque. This recommendation has been partially implemented.

159. It should be noted that in 1998, approximately 70 communities were visited in the municipalities of Chenalhó, Las Margaritas, Ocosingo and Altamirano. In addition, the General Coordinating Office for the Highlands and Rainforest of Chíapas gave eight human rights training courses from May 1998 to May 1999, four for civil servants and four for the general public. Pamphlets and posters published by this national organization on the subject of human rights placing emphasis on indigenous peoples have also been distributed.

160. In the area of humanitarian work, the General Coordination Office has been involved in the delivery of humanitarian assistance to indigenous persons from Chíapas who have been displaced from the conflict zone. This has taken the form of making arrangements with the appropriate Government authorities or using the financial resources of the National Human Rights Commission itself. Tables are attached containing data on the humanitarian assistance provided by the National Commission or arranged by it.

161. In collaboration with the Mexican Red Cross, brigades have been organized to assist displaced persons from the Chenalhó municipality. A camp was set up in the X'oyep sector of the Polhó community where food, tents and medicines were distributed. The National Commission has also participated in the organization of various social, sports and recreational events and in activities related to the health sector. The camp was closed on the initiative of some of the displaced on 21 July 1998.

162. In addition from 11 January to 30 March 1999, staff from the General Coordination Office, working with members of the Mexican Red Cross and the Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, A.C. Centre for Human Rights participated in humanitarian assistance brigades, which escorted displaced indigenous persons, most of whom were members of the Las Abejas organization in the municipality of Chenalhó, to the plots where they were harvesting coffee, as they feared being attacked by residents of their communities of origin. This assistance came to an end without incident in March, when visits were made by staff of the General Coordination Office to municipal and communally-owned land authorities in the area with a view to promoting peaceful coexistence in the region.